

stressing they cannot write a citation unless they are witnesses. If my agriculture inspector sees a violation and needs a citation written and he calls my officer over to write it, since the officer didn't see it, he can't write the citation. So, that was one of the main reasons we went to administrative violations and away from citations because we didn't have enough people.

Those are the primary things assigned to police officers, in addition to maintaining their Peace Officer Professional Standards certification status.

What makes these officers want to come and serve the Division of Animal Health if they don't have any experience in agriculture?

It's variable. In some cases, it has actually been money. We may have paid better than some local police or sheriffs' offices. Undoubtedly, that was part of it. To me, it is the best of both worlds. The risk is considerably less, the pay is as good or better and the hours are probably better. The environment in most cases is different, but I wouldn't say better. You're not scooping people up off the highway, but

you are working in animal environments, which, if you're not used to them, are challenging for some people. There is no one reason, but if I had to say, I would think salary is a large component, if not the driving force.

What is the base salary for an officer who works in this division?

There are different levels — Investigator I, II and III. It's going to vary, but I would say roughly our officers are paid between the low 30s and low 40s.

What types of animal abuse does the OSV encounter? Are the enforcement officers the only ones who deal with/answer calls about animal abuse?

The primary thing that we would encounter under an abuse statute would basically be not caring for, feeding or providing for the needs of an animal. Whether that be nutritional or environmental. In most cases it is nutritional.

Is that strictly related to things that are livestock or poultry, or does it cover the gamut of animals?

That is a gray area. We typically do not consider ourselves to have authority over pets. That said, we have on occasion responded to those. KRS Chapter 525 is not the best statute ever written. It has some things that need to be looked at. But, it is what we have. It applies to large animals and small animals. The Animal Control Board deals much more with small animals. Most of the small animal things we would address would be at shelters. Typically, whenever we have any type of an abuse case, large animal or small animal, we work with local law enforcement, whether that be an animal control officer or the local sheriff's office.

Cockfighting usually falls to state police. That's not to say that other local law enforcement wouldn't be involved. >>



◀ State Veterinarian Robert Stout peruses the animal exhibitions at the Kentucky State Fair in August. Stout is responsible for overseeing the agriculture inspectors and five investigators of the Division of Animal Health.